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THREE
PINDARIC ESSAYS.

FITZWALTER,
THE BIRTH OF DEMOCRACY,
AND THE
CALAMITIES OF FRANCE.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR JOHN OWEN, NO. 168, PICCADILLY.

1794.

THREE

PINDARIC ESSAYS.

BY THE AUTHOR



THE BIRTH OF DEMOCRACY.

AND THE

CAUSALITIES OF FRANCE.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN OWEN, NO. 103, FICKELEMAN.

1804.

FITZWALTER,

A PINDARIC ESSAY.

Tu civem, patremque geras ; tu consule cunctis,
Nec tibi ; nec tua te moveant, sed publica vota.

CLAUD.

NOW over Runny-mead * rose peaceful night,
Shedding her silver beams :
While gleaming like the icy plain,
In star-gemm'd Winter's frigid reign,
The silent camp return'd the snowy light.

* It is related by some historians, that King John failing to ravish, had poisoned the daughter of Fitzwalter (afterwards Mareschall of the Barons forces). Upon that circumstance the following Poem is founded. Time, the night before John's signing Magna Charta.

B

Their

Their strawy pallets Freedom's foldiers prest,
No clang of arms their stable flumbers broke:
But Hope, to sweeten more their long-fought rest,
Call'd round their heads his troop of shad'wy dreams.
They saw firm Courage shake off Slav'ry's yoke;
And purple Pow'r in roseate bondage bound,
Enthron'd upon a spreading oak,
With chearful smile strew happiness around.

Yet as amid some sacred grove,
Upon whose holy calm, with breathings rude,
The winds dare not intrude,
With touch unhallow'd, any leaf to move,
There the tall aspin shakes alone,
Nor feels the sacred awe:
So did Fitzwalter, 'mid the gen'ral peace,
Pant with dire griefs, to all but him unknown;
And as his moans encrease,
Pale Discord, who, with fell Despair,
Trail'd on the goreless ground her unfed hair,

Recov'ring,

Recov'ring, stretch'd her harpy claw;
Revenge, who droop'd his ruby crest,
Hearing the burring pinions shake,
Crow'd joyful as the golden bird of morn:
The drowfy fiends awake:---
While thus Fitzwalter, by their tortures torn,
Pour'd the fore anguish from his loaded breast.

' Yet shall he die! this steel, with regal gore,
' Shall tell that John---that Tyranny's no more:
' Shall say, a ravisher for Justice bled,
' A murderer expires---a murderer is dead.
' Some voice seraphic whispers in my ear,
" Arouse, Fitzwalter, know no woman's fear;
" Let vengeful fervor dry the falling tear
 " Shed for a daughter's death."
' Then let cold Cowardice, in Peace's name,
' My friends false ardor quench---their perjur'd bosoms tame,
' Revenge impells my soul with animating breath.

' If

‘ Matilda, Daughter, object of my care,
‘ If from thy blest abodes thou lov’st to bow,
‘ Oft list’ning anxious to a Father’s pray’r,
‘ O now attend---O hear my woe-fraught vow;
‘ And lay each word before th’ Eternal throne,
‘ Stand there thyself,---and let thy fainted shade,
‘ Call to th’ Omniscient mind, thy Father’s moan,
‘ Thy Father’s pray’rs, for thee so often made,
‘ Thy Father’s flatter’d hope, doom’d in its spring to fade.’

Why Discord trembled then thy languid wing?
Why faintly flew’st thou? Thro’ thy heavy way,
Mutt’ring forth thy blasting sighs?
Alas, thy hell-born influence droop’d---thy subject legion fled,
Shrieking shrill unheeded cries.
And lo, thro’ night bursts swift a dazzling ray,
Attendant Seraphim their flow’rets bring,
(Flowrets that on the rainbow grow)
And as before her steps their wreaths they fling,
Matilda’s form descends to heal a Father’s woe.

Fitzwalter

Fitzwalter, starting, saw the beauteous shade,
Extatic phrenzy thro' his fabric danc'd,
His feeble body trembled, fell entranc'd;
His spirit burst its bonds t' embrace the hallow'd maid.
So one whom fins with writhing anguish tear,
Pressing the couch of death,
Where fell Remorse flits round with haggard fear,
Views Mercy's beam thro' clouds of grief appear:
His panting body sinks devoid of breath,
His soul its Saviour meets amid the realms of air.

Now bliss celestial yields to filial love,
The fainted bosom heaves the human sigh,
The human tear drops from the holy eye;
While a bright Seraph of th' attendant choir,
Pours balmy music from her golden lyre,
And heavenly Echo answers from above.
" O why, Fitzwalter, pants thy breast with rage?
" Thy slumb'ring courage for the state to wake,
" To bid thee free the British realm oppress,

- “ Affliction’s arrow pierc’d thy canker’d rest,
“ Thy throes of agony a nation’s bondage shake.
“ So when amid the hunter’s toils,
“ The furious lion mingles with the spoils,
“ And feels the rapid torments of the dart,
“ Indignant with the smart,
“ He roars with phrenzy---on the net recoils,---
“ And sets the forest free.
“ So thou the liberator of thy country be.
“ Forgetful of thy wrongs,
“ Feed not expectant fiends with regal gore:
“ The guilty after life their crimes deplore.
“ Strive but t’establish firm, fair Freedom’s laws;
“ So shall thy name be sung in future songs,
“ And as Britannia’s ear the sounds engage,
“ She and her holy band shall join in thy applause.
“ O feeble race! to Nature’s dictates blind!
“ Unthinking Man!
“ Seek ye for light in yon tartarian cloud?

Those

- “ Those veils of darkness but dim vapours shroud,
 “ While fiends your force with hell-forg’d fetters bind.
 “ Does Reason’s beam but dazzle hood-wink’d Sin?
 “ O rouse the soul that sleeps your breasts within.
 “ She darting round the mental eye,
 “ Shall Order’s hidden form descry:
 “ Shall hear her voice divine harmoniously loud:
 “ Shall see vivific heat, in lucid stream,
 “ Pour life o’er Nature, from the solar beam:
 “ Shall see it glow refulgent on the surge,
 “ That ’gainst the humble shore rude threats to urge,
 “ Oft rises foaming from its azure bed:
 “ Shall view th’ ethereal priests the orient mandates bear,
 “ Commanded round Heat’s fostering powers to shed:
 “ And suff’ring Earth with bursting produce teem,
 “ Pour her rich off’rings forth, chanting a thankful pray’r.

 “ And as with ecstasy she views,
 “ To th’ elements harmonious order given,
 “ Shall bid proud Kings no longer realms abuse,

 “ But

- “ But like the sun dispense the gifts of Heav’n:
 “ Shall bid patricians, as Cerulean waves,
 “ Wat’ring, by unseen ways, the thirsty ground:
 “ Tho’ tumid Pride with boist’rous fury raves,
 “ Oft humid Pow’r from heat tyrannic faves,
 “ While streams, bright golden veins, red plenty rolls around.
 “ Shall bid plebeian worth,
 (“ Fruitful as the humble earth)
 “ Shed its rich incense to superior pow’rs:
 “ And as th’ encircling influence of the air,
 “ Breathes in the bubbling waves, the op’ning flow’r,
 “ Around this nether world corporeal life:
 “ So see, the whole Religion’s cherish’d care:
 “ She bears the glory of th’ eternal beam,
 “ And darts calm Peace thro’ earth-born vapor’s strife.

Thus fang the Seraph; and thro’ æther flows,
 Again a gloried path. The vision rose.
 Two Seraphs roll’d behind the gold-pav’d light,
 And darkness following swift, clos’d all with black-rob’d night.

Fitzwalter’s

Fitzwalter's soul with warmth divine imprest,
Re-animates his throbbing clay:
And as he struck with ecstasy his breast,
His eyes uplifted---hands together prest---
“ O heav'n,” he cry'd, “ thy dictates I obey.”

Thus some stray'd trav'ler thro' the stormy night,
Behind whose hurried steps hastes wild Affright.
Treads the high precipice's fearful brink:
His guardian angel to his succour flies,
Tears in thund'ring clouds a passage for the light.
The moon emits her ray,
And as he fees his way,
The trav'ler lifts to heav'n his thankful eyes.

THE

BIRTH OF DEMOCRACY,

A PINDARIC ESSAY.

WHEN rising Nature felt th' Almighty nod,
And Chaos fled,
Thro' the new world calm æther spread,
Th' astonish'd fun saw bursting spheres disclose,
While at the voice omnipotent of God,
Order arose,
And Justice, smiling sweet, her sister Freedom led.
From distant Hell, grim Satan view'd the scene;
His entrails scorch'd by Orcus' fire,
Now palpitate with new desire;

And

And as with tortur'd ecstasy he figh'd,
' By ev'ry pow'r malign I swear,' he cry'd,
 ' By Death's fell shade,
' By Sin's black adamantine gate and snaky hair,
' Again the full fraught force of Heav'n I dare;
' Yon form angelic by his pow'r made,
' Yon cherub Liberty shall reign Tartarus' Queen.'

Then hideous darkness shook her pinions wide,
 Fiends whisp'ring hiss'd her plumes within---
 Uprising arms were heard in trembling din:
And Justice shrieks---her sister's from her side.

Torn was her auburn hair, her ruddy vest,
When by infernal force in Hell comprest,
 Fair Freedom's womb conceiv'd a direful birth:
Yet as she sorrowing sat on Satan's throne,
 The prostrate dæmons bending round,
Caught sweet repentance from her moan:
 In her sad cries, they heard a secret sound,

Sweet

Sweet as the murm'ring of a willow'd stream:
They heard---they seiz'd their arms---
Arms that cast a fulphur'd gleam:
While Satan, 'midst his festive mirth,
Felt fore alarms:
He shook his massy lance and dread destructive frown'd.
All Hell submissive bent,
Applauding---trembling---as he sent
His dang'rous mistress banish'd to the earth.

Where Thracia's pines by breath tempestuous torn,
Roll from the mountain's brow,
And torrents roar below,
Stray'd Liberty, pale, fearful, bare, forlorn.
Her gorey feet with painful step imprint,
On many a trodden flow'ret, Sorrow's ruby tint,
And dropping tears bedew'd her thorny ways.
And oft for Justice' help she cries,
Her mournful accents broke with bursting sighs.
And oft her eyes to Heav'n remorseful turn,

Oft wander round in wistful glance,
Oft stedfast in a fightless trance,
Sink on her folded arms their silent gaze.
So some fond widow, o'er the tear-dank urn,
Prest with cold silence to her throbbing breast,
Seeks with wild view the oft-call'd shade:
No lift'ning ghost may calm her mind distressed;
The hope-rais'd forms from weary fancy fade,
And fightless on the urn her blood-dropt eye-balls rest.

In a dark cavern sunk her fainting force:
A tyger's dwelling.---He with hungry glare,
Roll'd his red sight, and shook his stiffen'd hair;
Then fullen left his haunt, growling dire threat'nings hoarse.
There as she shrieking prest the rugged earth,
Forth from her yearning womb, an hideous birth,
Democracy arose:
The mother pants beneath her woes;
And as her gasping being seem'd to die away,
Torpid Annihilation o'er his prey,
Sat watching her soul-rending throes.

As

As when the eagle from his cloudless height,
Stretching to pendant earth his piercing sight,
Oft views his native rock with watchful care,
His pinions tremble with paternal fear,
His nestling's cries he seems to hear,
And cleaves with downward wing the yielding air;
So Justice from her heavenly throne,
Lift'ning to her sister's moan,
With sweet-voic'd Mercy, Pity mantled grey,
Swift to the rolling earth darts thro' th' aerial way.
"Be comforted," she cried. And Mercy pour'd
From her soft breast the milky balm:
The throbbing woes subside in peaceful calm:
Again is liberty to Justice' arms restor'd.

Yet still her heart a mother's sorrow's prove,
The fiend Democracy divides her love.
Oft trembling on her cheek hang all her joys:
While brooding mischief, in her foster arms
He wayward shrieks--the flatt'ring calm destroys.

And

And as she, anxious for his peace,
Stoops with maternal tears to bid his troubles cease:

He rises furious from her soothing lap,

Her vestment rends---imprints with gore her charms,
And rearing high her blood-stain'd cap,
Tears her fair hair---finging with frantic noise.

So when by earth's nutritive care,
The tree of fate lifts high its death-fraught leaves,
The verdant grafs, mild Terra's dew-gemm'd hair,
Withers beneath the dreadful shade,
The braided flow'rets fade,
And the maternal ground embrown'd with horror grieves.

THE
CALAMITIES OF FRANCE,

A PINDARIC ESSAY.

WHENCE come these dread tempestuous sounds,
That seem to shake far distant grounds,
And rapid roar upon my startl'd ear?
O hark from far, what din of woes!
Eolus, furious, strikes his untun'd harp:
Deep mournful notes Boreas blows,
With moanings hoarse and shrieks shrill woeful sharp;
Against some turret's front oppos'd he howls,
Where a dæmon sits and growls:

F

And

And in th' approaching storm I hear,
Sad mortals dismal cries:
Bestial lowings---human sighs---
And dread terrific noises now more loud, more near!
Hark, hark, how near!

Behold, here, from this chalky cliff,
What thick'ning clouds o'er Gallia spread:
Lo! horrid dæmons laughing lift,
Dull flumb'ring night from off his Stygian bed,
"Arouse, arouse!" they cry, "usurp the place of day."
Whilst the wind, with boist'rous force,
Hollows thro' the sacred fane,
Shakes firm pillars in its course:
The strong-arch'd roof,---the stone-built wall,
Tremble at the deadly blast;
And the monuments of kings,
Forbidden to eternity to last,
Tott'ring, tott'ring, tott'ring---fall.

And

And lo! amid th' encircling gloom,
Low hangs yon storm-distended cloud,
Darker than ancient chaos, Nature's womb.
There meeting vapors join their foetid breath:
And as the thunder tells his mandates loud,
Red fiends upon the light'ning's glare
Ride---darting thro' the sulphur'd air,
To execute on earth their direful work of death.

Yelling, see them quick descend,
Yon ivy'd tow'r, lo, they rend,
And join the frighten'd screech-owl's woeful scream.
And as they fan the air with tainting wing,
The spreading beech---the lofty pine---
And knotted oaks their blasting influence feel.
Then perching mirthful on the wreathing vine,
They press the purple fruit:
And as they strike dire notes upon th' Avernian lute,
Dancing around in bacchanalian reel,
They shake their raven plumes with lurid gleam,
And 'mid all Nature's tortures, hell-framed numbers sing.

Still do I live?---some præternat'ral force,
 Urges thro' æther plains a rapid course;
 And as the eagle hails the day,
 Shakes from his pinions dusky night,
 And, wing'd by daring impulse, flies,
 And foars to meet the light;
 So, far above the precincts of the storm,
 Impell'd along th' aerial way,
 I view with glories burst the op'ning skies,
 Divine effulgence pour the flaming ray,
 And Britain's guardian angel beam in bright seraphic form :
 And ruddy Liberty, and wounded Peace,
 And Commerce, mantl'd with a snowy fleece,
 Who with the muses sit around,
 And whisper war, mad Gallia's force to quell :
 I hear their notes Britannia's splendor tell,
 And as they thus strike sweet th' harmonious shell, }
 Our guardian angel smiles, pleas'd with the heav'nly sound.

“ O sacred

“ O sacred isle! around thy shore,
“ Cerulean surges vainly roar.
“ Or subject to thy sov'reign oaks,
“ Or to thy lusty rowers' strokes,
“ They passive roll thy ports along,
“ 'Mid thy navy tuneful glide,
“ Lashing oft each vessel's side,
“ Responsive to thy seamens' song.

“ O sacred isle! thy gen'rous plains,
“ Repay with golden sheaves the swains:
“ Thy verdant vales and mountains steep,
“ Are silver'd o'er with fleecy sheep:
“ Thy hamlets lift their glitt'ring spires,
“ While thy unwall'd cities round,
“ Hear no foeman's trumpet sound,
“ Lift'ning to Mirth and Plenty's lyres.

“ O sacred isle! when warlike strains,
“ Call forth thy sons to distant plains,

- “ Its glorious folds thy standard rears,
“ And laurels twine thy gorey spears :
“ And perjur’d streams from bosoms pour,
“ Who destruction to design,
“ Envious at thy splendors pine,
“ And vainly threat thy fearless shore.
“ O still that edifice protect,
“ Where Concord’s brazen pillar, tripple form !
“ Supports, on Fortitude’s firm base, bright Justice’ throne;
“ O there let patriot truth be known,
“ Crushing Corruption’s fell devouring worm.
“ Then Faction still shall fore desponding groan,
“ And Discord, riding ’mid her direful storm,
“ Stirring tempests with her hateful breath,
“ Hence shall hurl the bolt of death,
“ And all her subject powers that Gallia’s peace have wreck’d.”

F I N I S



